

## 2009 hurricane season forecast: active

It's nearly impossible to accurately predict the number of hurricanes that will hit the U. S. coast each year. Narrow that strike zone to only Texas, and it's even more of a guess. But we can't resist peeking into the crystal ball, at the least the ball that belongs to the University of Colorado, which is the academic center for hurricane prediction. Climatologists there are predicting 14 named storms for 2009; seven of those are forecast to become hurricanes. The average number of named storms between 1950 and 2000 was 9.6, while the average number of hurricanes for the same time was 5.9. For more information, go to <http://hurricane.atmos.colostate.edu/Forecasts/2008/dec2008/dec2008.pdf>. Hurricane season runs June 1 through November 30.

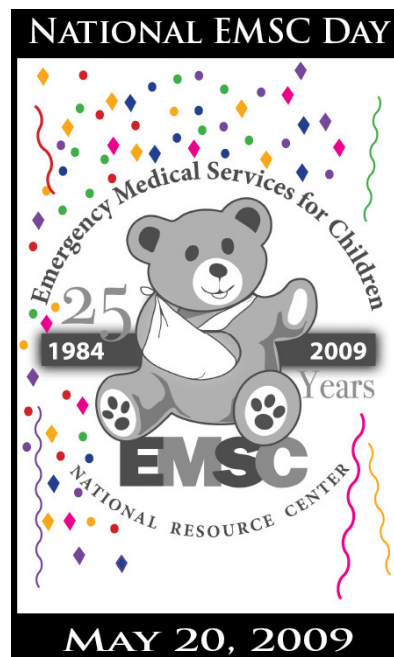


## 2009 hurricane names

Ana	Larry
Bill	Mindy
Claudette	Nicholas
Danny	Odette
Erika	Peter
Fred	Rose
Grace	Sam
Henri	Teresa
Ida	Victor
Joaquin	Wanda
Kate	

## EMSC Day set for May 20

EMS for Children Day is scheduled for Wednesday, May 20, in the middle of EMS Week. The EMSC National Resource Center (NRC) has developed an EMSC Day Toolkit that includes: tips for reaching your target audiences (parents and caregivers or staff and volunteers); background material about the history of EMSC; camera ready clip-art and public service announcements (PSA); injury prevention information; and activity pages for children. The toolkit is available at no charge at [www.childrensnational.org/emsc](http://www.childrensnational.org/emsc). All clip art, PSAs and children's activity sheets are also available for download in their original format at full size.



## Free poison materials available

Everyone knows poison ivy can cause skin irritation. But did you know ingesting an oleander leaf can affect the heart? The Texas Poison Control Network website offers information on many substances and poison prevention materials, including brochures on poisonous plants and venomous critters, at no charge. Many of the brochures are available in Spanish and English. For more information, go to [www.poisoncontrol.org](http://www.poisoncontrol.org). And, if you need information on treating exposures, call (800) 222-1222 to speak with specialists in poisoning emergency treatment and poison prevention.



## Texas lawmakers stay busy

Texas lawmakers have not been shy about filing bills this session. When the March 13 deadline for filing rolled around, 7,144 bills had been filed, a 21 percent increase over the number filed last session. Here's what happens after it's filed: When a bill is filed in the legislature that affects EMS and trauma systems, OEMS/TS is asked to do an analysis that determines all the costs and ramifications of the legislation for the agency. We've listed all the bills that we have been asked to analyze on our website ([www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/2009LegislativeEMSbills.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/2009LegislativeEMSbills.shtm)) with a link to each bill on the Legislature's website. We'll continue to add to the list as we are assigned the bills. Most of the bills filed each year never make it out of committee and into the House or Senate for full debate. To see a full copy of any bill, you can link from our website to a particular bill, or go to [www.capitol.state.tx.us](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us) and do a search. Use Bill Lookup when you already know the bill number; Text Search when you do not know the bill number but know content; or Bill Search to search using multiple criteria such as author, committee, subject or action. For a refresher on the legislative process and what happens to a bill, click on "Legislative Process" on the right hand side for a quick lesson. You can also call the bill status hotline at (877) 824-7038 (in Texas only, toll-free) or (512) 463-2182 (outside of Texas). The hotline is available during the session Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., or until the Legislature adjourns for the day.

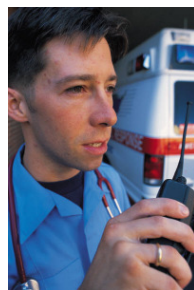


## CDC offers medical form

Knowing a patient's medical history is invaluable – especially in a disaster when normal records aren't available. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is offering the "Keep It With You" (KIWWY) personal medical information form, designed for people who need care during disasters and similar situations. The form lists medications, medical conditions and other important information for emergency responders. Go to [www.emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/kiwy.asp](http://www.emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/kiwy.asp) for a copy of the form.



## Grants available for ECA training



Are you in a rural area that needs more EMS personnel? DSHS has a total of \$50,000 in this fiscal year available for EMS training programs, registered first responder organizations (FROs), coordinators and instructors to conduct ECA courses in rural or underserved areas of the state lacking local EMS training resources. Grant funds cover the cost of instruction and textbooks, and other expenses such as printing and supplies. OEMS/TS will accept grant applications on a first-come-first-served basis until the funds run out for the fiscal year. Eligibility requirements for ECAT grants: A minimum of three students; students must agree to perform emergency care attendant services for at least one year with a local emergency medical service provider or first responder organization; and services must be provided in a designated rural or underserved area of Texas, as determined by zip code or county. For more information, go to [www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/TrainingFunding.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/TrainingFunding.shtm) or contact Roxanne Cuellar at (512) 834-6700 ext. 2377 or [roxanne.cuellar@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:roxanne.cuellar@dshs.state.tx.us).

Recently awarded grants:

Bovina EMS

Knox County EMS

Nacogdoches Memorial  
Hospital Education &  
Training Program

On Duty



## Drinking age laws studied

What effect do minimum drinking age laws have? The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has released *Effects of 21 Minimum Legal Drinking Age Laws on Alcohol-Related Driving in the United States*. The report looks at how the laws affect alcohol consumption and alcohol-related crashes among people younger than 21. No surprise: A legal age of 21 reduces drinking, problematic drinking, drinking and driving and alcohol-related crashes among young people. Access the report at [www.iihs.org/research/topics/pdf/r1112.pdf](http://www.iihs.org/research/topics/pdf/r1112.pdf).

## Half-a-Million: EMS responds to a big event

Now we know: One day, one place and 450,000 concert goers translate to 1,800 patients treated by paramedics, nurses and doctors. A University of Wisconsin report describes EMS response to the largest single-day, ticketed concert held in North America: the 2003 "Toronto Rocks!" Rolling Stones concert in July 2003. The ten-page report describes planning, how the event happened and what could be improved – information that might help other EMS agencies plan for big events. For the entire report, go to <http://pdm.medicine.wisc.edu/19-4%20PDFs/Feldman.pdf>.



## 'Red Flags' rule affects EMS

What does the Federal Trade Commission have to do with EMS? Plenty, when it comes to preventing identity theft. Under these federal (not state) rules, EMS agencies must follow the Federal Trade Commission's new "Red Flag Rules" for preventing identity theft. This rule, developed in response to the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003 (FACTA), requires financial institutions and creditors to develop and implement written "identity theft prevention programs." The programs must provide for the identification, detection and response to "red flag" patterns, practices or specific activities that indicate potential identity theft. Why is EMS included? Under FACTA, "creditor" is defined the same way it is in the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA): Any entity that regularly extends, renews or continues credit; any entity that regularly arranges for the extension, renewal or continuation of credit; or any assignee of an original creditor who is involved in the decision to extend, renew or continue credit. The ECOA definition of credit includes a right granted to defer payment for any purchase. Thus, any person that provides a product or service for which the consumer pays after delivery is a creditor—including emergency medical services agencies. The Federal Trade Commission suspended enforcement of the new rule until May 1, 2009, to give creditors additional time to develop and implement written identity theft prevention programs. Go to [www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/business/alerts/alt050.shtm](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/business/alerts/alt050.shtm) for more information or Google "red flag rules" for more resources.



## New exhibit hours for conference

We're shaking things up a bit at Texas EMS Conference 2009. Classes will remain the same – preconference on Friday, Saturday and Sunday; one- and two-hour classes on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. But we're opening the exhibit hall much earlier on Sunday and staying open all day Sunday and all day Monday. At 3 p.m. on Monday, the exhibit hall closes and exhibitors move out. There will be no exhibit hall on Tuesday or Wednesday, but there will be classes as usual. The new hours give you almost the same number of open hours for the exhibit hall, but the change means many more hours in which classes do not conflict with the exhibit hall. It saves the conference money by cutting out exhibitor lunches and additional exhibit hall rental on Tuesday. But the bottom line is that we can keep our registration price the same, and that's a good thing in this economy.



# 2009 award nominations due October 6

Sure, we know it seems like a long way off – but now is the time to start looking around for people or organizations who might deserve a Texas EMS and trauma award. If you've been nominated or done the nominating, you know just how exciting it is when the awards are announced at Texas EMS Conference.

Each category honors a person or organization that exemplifies the best that EMS/trauma system has to offer. It's quite an honor to be nominated and to win. The categories and the explanations are listed below and on the nomination form. Once you've chosen the correct category, the rest is pretty easy.



## How can I nominate someone or a service for an award?

Go to [www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/09AwardsIntroduction.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/09AwardsIntroduction.shtm). Save the nomination form to your computer and fill it out by clicking in the gray areas beside each question. When you finish, save the file and email to [EMSAwards@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:EMSAwards@dshs.state.tx.us).

Include written explanations of why this person or organization should win. Please be specific, using examples when possible. Keep in mind that the people who review the nominations most likely won't be as familiar with your nominee as you are.

**Send the file to us by email no later than October 6, 2009.** The packets are then given to programs in the Office of EMS and Trauma Systems Coordination and sent to each EMS zone office. Each program and zone ranks the nominations for each category and returns the information to the Office, where scores are tallied. Scores are kept confidential from all except those who tally the scores. Winners are announced at the Awards Luncheon at Texas EMS Conference.

## Award Categories 2009

**EMS Educator Award** honors a state-certified EMS instructor or course coordinator who offers advanced EMS education in Texas.

**EMS Medical Director Award** honors a physician who has served as a medical director, on-line or off-line, for an EMS organization.

**EMS Administrator Award** honors an administrator, researcher or manager at the local, city, county, regional or state level who has made a positive contribution to EMS.

**Public Information/Injury Prevention Award** honors an EMS group or individual for outstanding achievement in public education or injury prevention.

**Citizen Award** honors a private citizen for a heroic lifesaving act or unique advocacy of EMS.

**Private/Public Provider Award** honors a ground or air organization that demonstrated a leadership role in EMS by achievement in areas of patient care, public access, medical control, disaster preparedness, public education and training.

**Volunteer Provider Award** honors an organization staffed by volunteers that assumed a leadership role in EMS by achievement in areas of patient care, public access, medical control, disaster preparedness, public education and training.

**First Responder Award** honors a first responder organization that assumed a leadership role in EMS by achievement in areas of patient care, public access, medical control, disaster preparedness, public education and training.

**Air Medical Service Award** honors a public or private air medical service in Texas, a leader in the field, that has demonstrated the highest standards in providing patient care to the citizens of Texas.

**Outstanding EMS Person of the Year** honors an EMS-certified person who has demonstrated uncommon leadership and courage in providing emergency medical service to the citizens of Texas.

**Telecommunicator of the Year** honors a person or team who handles a call or system event with a professionalism and efficiency that allowed the first responders on the scene to give the patients the best patient care possible. An individual or a team is eligible for the award.

**Trauma Center Award** honors a designated trauma facility in Texas that has demonstrated leadership and high standards in implementing injury prevention programs and providing trauma patient care to the citizens and visitors of Texas.

**Regional Advisory Council Award** honors a regional advisory council in Texas that has demonstrated leadership and high standards in improving emergency medical service to the citizens of Texas.

On  
Duty



## Star of Texas nominations due July 31

In 2003, the 78th Texas Legislature passed House Bill 1937, which created the Star of Texas Awards to honor first responders seriously injured or killed while performing their duties as peace officers, firefighters and emergency medical first responders. HB 1937 also designated September 11th of every year as Texas First Responders Day. The first Star of Texas awards were presented in 2004 to three Texas first responders, one for each category of first responder: emergency medical, fire and law enforcement. The 79th Texas Legislature amended the original legislation to require awards for every first responder seriously injured or killed after September 1, 2003. To be eligible for the award, the critical incident must have occurred between September 1, 2003, and June 30, 2009, and the individual must not have previously received a Star of Texas Award. The awards ceremony will be held in the fall. Deadline for nominations is July 31. For more information, go to [http://governor.state.tx.us/cjd/star\\_awards](http://governor.state.tx.us/cjd/star_awards).

## NHTSA offers EMS resources

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Office of EMS has plenty of resources to help you educate your community about EMS. One booklet describes a crash victim's experience from the initial 9-1-1 call to transport to a trauma facility. Copies are free. Go to [www.ems.gov](http://www.ems.gov) to order or for a complete list of materials.



## Make your funding request a success

Has your area suffered a devastating event? The Extraordinary Emergency Fund (EEF) is available to assist licensed EMS providers, hospitals and registered first responder organizations if unforeseeable events cause a degradation of service to the community. Situations that may severely reduce or incapacitate emergency response capability are considered extraordinary emergencies. You can increase your chances of success in requesting funding by remembering the following guidelines.



- Organizations eligible to apply include: licensed EMS providers, licensed hospitals and registered first responder organizations.
- Your organization must be meeting its Regional Advisory Council (RAC) participation requirements. Contact your RAC to verify this requirement.
- Requests are evaluated to determine whether the "emergent" need will create a degradation in the service you currently provide to your community if not fulfilled.
- Items cannot be purchased prior to receiving a contract. This fund is not a reimbursement grant. Items funded can only be purchased during the contract period once the grant is awarded.
- In the case of a malfunctioning piece of equipment, include with your request the documents showing the repair history of the product. Other helpful documentation could include a supporting statement from the manufacturer indicating that the product has been outdated and cannot be fixed.
- Extraordinary Emergency Funding is not available for equipment upgrades or enhancement of services. For that type of funding, please contact our office or your local EMS regional staff about the annual Local Projects Grant. Applications for this grant will be due soon (see page 7 for details).

After a request has been funded, your organization must send in relevant receipts to verify purchase of the requested items/services. You also will be required to send an impact statement describing how the funding has helped your organization and community at large. For further information, please contact Roxanne Cuellar at [Roxanne.cuellar@dsht.state.tx.us](mailto:Roxanne.cuellar@dsht.state.tx.us) or (512) 834-6700, ext. 2377.

The following organization was awarded Extraordinary Emergency Funding recently:

**Scott & White EMS**  
**\$69,294 for an ambulance**



## Check NREMT status online

You know you can check your certification/licensure status online at the DSHS website. Did you know you

can also check National Registry status online? If you know the city/state and at least the last name, go to [www.nremt.org/about/checkEMTStatus.asp](http://www.nremt.org/about/checkEMTStatus.asp). If you know the social security number, National Registry number and date of birth, go to [www.nremt.org](http://www.nremt.org) and click on Check Registrant Status near the bottom of the page.